IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions. Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently amended) Method for amplification of a target RNA sequence comprising the following steps:

(a) annealing a first primer to the target RNA sequence, said first primer comprising a first hybridizing sequence and a promoter sequence, wherein the promoter sequence is operatively associated with the first hybridizing sequence and the first hybridizing sequence ~~which~~ is complementary to and hybridizes to at least a first segment of the target RNA sequence~~, operatively associated with a promoter sequence~~;

(b) extending said first primer in a reaction catalyzed by a DNA polymerase, forming a first RNA/cDNA hybrid nucleic acid molecule;

(c) selectively removing the target RNA sequence of the first RNA/cDNA hybrid nucleic acid molecule forming a ~~fist~~ first single stranded cDNA sequence;

(d) annealing a second primer to the obtained first single stranded cDNA sequence, said second primer comprising a second hybridizing sequence which is complementary to and hybridizes to a first segment of the first single stranded cDNA sequence;

(e) extending said second primer in a reaction catalyzed by a DNA polymerase to form a first double stranded DNA molecule; and

(f) employing the first double stranded DNA molecule of step (e) in the preparation of a plurality of RNA transcripts that are complementary to the target RNA sequence in a reaction catalyzed by a DNA-dependent RNA polymerase with specificity for the promoter sequence comprised in ~~the~~said first primer[[;]],

wherein ~~the~~said first primer comprises a first hybridizing sequence of 7 to 14 nucleotides, a transcription enhancing sequence comprising said promoter sequence, and ~~an~~ a first oligonucleotide anchor ~~which is capable of binding~~that binds to a second segment of the target RNA sequence, whereby the transcription enhancing sequence creates a loop between the first oligonucleotide anchor and the first hybridizing sequence upon annealing of said first primer to the target RNA sequence and/or wherein ~~the~~said second primer comprises a second hybridizing sequence of 7 to 14 nucleotides, an amplification enhancing sequence comprising no promoter

sequence and ~~an~~a second oligonucleotide anchor ~~which is capable of binding~~that binds to a second segment of the first single stranded cDNA, whereby the amplification enhancing sequence creates a loop between the second oligonucleotide anchor and the second hybridizing sequence upon annealing of said second primer to the first single stranded cDNA sequence.

2. (Currently amended) Method according to claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

(g) annealing ~~the~~said second primer to the RNA transcripts produced in step (f);

(h) extending ~~the~~said second primer in a reaction catalyzed by the DNA polymerase to form a second RNA/cDNA hybrid nucleic acid molecule;

(i) selectively removing the RNA of the second RNA/cDNA hybrid molecule to obtain a second single stranded cDNA molecule;

(j) annealing ~~the~~said first primer to the obtained second single stranded cDNA sequence;

(k) extending the 3' end of the second single stranded cDNA molecule in a reaction catalyzed by the DNA polymerase using ~~the~~said first primer as a template to form a second partly double stranded DNA molecule comprising a double stranded ~~promotor~~promoter site; and

(l) employing the second double stranded DNA molecule of step (k) in the preparation of a plurality of RNA transcripts complementary to the target RNA sequence in a reaction catalyzed by the DNA-dependent RNA polymerase with specificity for the ~~promotor~~promoter sequence in the first primer.

3. (Currently amended) Method of claim 1, wherein ~~the~~said first primer comprises, ~~going~~ from the 5' end to the 3' end, ~~an~~ a first oligonucleotide anchor, a transcription enhancing sequence comprising said promoter, and a first hybridizing sequence ~~consisting~~ of 7 to 14 nucleotides which are complementary to a first segment of the target RNA sequence of 7 to 14 contiguous nucleotides.

4. (Currently amended) Method of claim 1, wherein ~~the~~said second primer comprises, ~~going~~ from the 5' end to the 3' end, ~~an~~ a second oligonucleotide anchor, an amplification enhancing sequence comprising no promoter, and a second hybridizing sequence ~~consisting~~ of 7 to 14 nucleotides which are complementary to ~~the~~a first segment of the first single stranded cDNA sequence of 7-14 contiguous nucleotides.

5. (Currently amended) Method [[a]] of claim 1, wherein the first hybridizing sequence of said first primer comprises 7-10 nucleotides which are complementary to a first segment of the target RNA sequence[[s]] of 7 to 10 contiguous nucleotides.

6. (Currently amended) Method of claim 1, wherein the first oligonucleotide anchor of said first primer ~~is an optionally modified oligonucleotide, comprising~~ comprises 7 to 22 ~~optionally modified~~ nucleotides which bind[[s]] to ~~the~~a second segment of the target RNA sequence ~~or to the second segment of the first single stranded cDNA molecule~~.

7. (Currently amended) Method of claim 6, wherein the first oligonucleotide anchor ~~is an optionally modified oligonucleotide, comprising~~comprises 7 to 14, preferably 9-14, ~~optionally modified~~ nucleotides.

8. (Currently amended) Method of claim [[6]]1, wherein the first oligonucleotide anchor comprises DNA, RNA[[,]] or modified nucleotides ~~2'O-methyl modified nucleotides and/or LNA~~.

9. (Currently amended) Method of claim 1, wherein the first oligonucleotide anchor comprises PNA.

10. (Currently amended) Method of claim 1, wherein ~~the anchor comprises a protein, or fragments derived thereof, which bind(s) to the second segment of the target RNA sequence or~~

~~the second segment of the first single stranded cDNA molecule~~said second oligonucleotide anchor of said second primer comprises 7 to 22 nucleotides which bind to a second segment of the first single stranded cDNA molecule.

11. (Currently amended) Method of claim 10, wherein the ~~protein, or fragments derived thereof, are chosen from the group consisting of a RNA binding protein, a polyC-binding protein, a polyA-binding protein and a protein comprising a zinc-finger, a restriction enzyme, and an antibody, or fragments thereof.~~second oligonucleotide anchor comprises 7 to 14, preferably 9-14, nucleotides.

12. (Previously presented) Method of claim 1, wherein the second segment is separated from the first segment by 0 to 6 nucleotides, preferably by 0 to 4 nucleotides, more preferably by 0 to 3 nucleotides.

13. (Currently amended) Method of claim 1, wherein the transcription enhancing sequence comprises the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:39 ~~reads:~~

~~5'-AAACGGGCACGAGC-3' (SEQ ID NO:39)~~.

14. (Currently amended) Method of claim 1, wherein the amplification enhancing sequence comprises the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:40 ~~reads:~~

~~5'-GACTTCAGGACTTCAGG-3' (SEQ ID NO:40)~~.

15. (Previously presented) Method of claim 1, wherein the promoter sequence is the bacteriophage T7 promoter sequence.

16. (Previously presented) Method of claim 1, wherein the DNA polymerase is the avian myeloblastosis virus (AMV) reverse transcriptase.

17. (Previously presented) Method of claim 1, wherein the target RNA sequence is a segment of the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).

18. (Previously presented) Method of claim 1, wherein the target nucleic acid is a segment of the human hepatitis C virus.

19. (Previously presented) Method of claim 1, wherein the RNA transcripts are detected by one or more sequence-specific probes.

20. (Currently amended) Method of claim 19, wherein the sequence-specific probe hybridizes to a sequence identical to the amplification sequence of ~~the~~said second primer.

21-33. (Canceled).

34. (New) The method of claim 8, wherein the modified nucleotides comprise 2'O-methyl modified nucleotides and/or LNA.

35. (New) Method of claim 11, wherein the second oligonucleotide anchor comprises DNA, RNA or modified nucleotides.

36. (New) Method of claim 35, wherein the modified nucleotides comprise 2'O-methyl modified nucleotides and/or LNA.

37. (New) Method of claim 1, wherein the second oligonucleotide anchor comprises PNA.

38. (New) Method of claim 1, wherein the second hybridizing sequence of said second primer comprises 7-10 nucleotides which are complementary to a first segment of the first single stranded cDNA sequence of 7 to 10 contiguous nucleotides.